

Message Text

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ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9487

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 13410

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, OTRA (AMMASSARI, PROF. GIUSEPPE), IT

SUBJECT: US-ITALY ENERGY WORKING GROUP (EWG): PROPOSED

VISIT OF MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY OFFICIAL AMMASSARI

REF: (A) ROME 12952 (B) ROME 13204

1. AS NOTED REFTELS, PROF. GIUSEPPE AMMASSARI, MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR ENERGY SOURCES AND BASIC INDUSTRY, PLANS TO LEAD GOI DELEGATION TO US FOR DISCUSSIONS SEPTEMBER 7-10 WITH ERDA ON NUCLEAR FACILITY PHYSICAL SECURITY. AS WELL, AMMASSARI HAS ACCEPTED EMBASSY'S OFFER TO INVESTIGATE POSSIBILITY OF ARRANGING ADDITIONAL TWO-DAY (SEPTEMBER 13-14) PROGRAM FOR HIM ALONE. THIS TELEGRAM ADDRESSES BOTH OUR RATIONALE FOR SUGGESTING THIS ADDITIONAL PROGRAM AND POSSIBLE ELEMENTS WHICH A PROGRAM MIGHT CONTAIN.

2. EMBASSY REGARDS AMMASSARI VI IT AS SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUAINT A KEY ITALIAN OFFICIAL WITH US PERSPECTIVES ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF ENRGY SITUATION AND PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING EWG BUT ALSO IN OTHER AREAS AS WELL. MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY IS THE ITALIAN MINISTRY MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH DOMESTIC ENERGY MATTERS. THE RANGE OF MININD CONCERNS INCLUDE REGULATION OF PETROLEUM COMPANIES, ENERGY CONSERVATION, OVER-ALL SUPERVISION OF NATIONAL ELECTRICAL ENERGY AGENCY (ENEL) AND NATIONAL NUCLEAR ENERGY AGENCY (CNEN), ENERGY

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STATISTICS AND THE FORMULATION OF ITALIAN ENERGY POLICY. IN

THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD, MININD PROVIDES TECHNICAL TALENT TO STAFF GOI DELEGATIONS TO IEA AND OTHER ENERGY-RELATED AGENCIES AND HAS STRONG VOICE IN GOI POLICY TOWARDS A COMMON EC ENERGY POLICY. MININD'S VIEWPOINT HAS OFTEN BEEN NATIONALISTIC, OFTEN DOWNPLAYING IMPORTANCE OF OIL-CONSUMING COUNTRY COOPERATION AS PROMOTED BY THE USG AND THE MORE INTERNATIONALLY ATTUNED MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THE ITALIAN NATIONAL ENERGY PLAN IS AN EXAMPLE (SEE EMBASSY REPORTING FOR FLAVOR).

3. AMMASSARI IS AT THE TOP OF THE CAREER RANKS IN MININD. HE HAS CLOSE TIES WITH CURRENT MINISTER DONAT CATTIN, WHO HAND-PICKED HIM FOR HIS POSITION (INCIDENTALLY AROUSING CONSIDERABLE ANIMOSITY AMONG CAREER MINISTRY OFFICIALS). WHILE DONAT CATTIN'S TENURE IS UNCERTAIN, AMMASSARI COULD REMAIN FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD. AMMASSARI HIMSELF BROUGHT NO PREVIOUS ENERGY EXPERIENCE TO HIS CURRENT POSITION, A FACTOR WHICH HAS MADE HIM DEFENSIVE AND SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT TO APPROACH. AS HE HAS GAINED CONFIDENCE, HE HAS OPENED UP SOMEWHAT BUT HIS NATURAL RESERVE AND SOMEWHAT ABRUPT MANNER MAKE EASY RELATIONS DIFFICULT. NEVERTHELESS, ALTHOUGH REFLECTING THE LEFT-POPULIST SOLUTIONS ADVOCATED BY HIS MENTOR, AMMASSARI IS QUICK, INTELLIGENT AND BYAND-LARGE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARDS THE US. DURING HIS TENURE AS DG FOR ENERGY SOURCES, HE VISITED THE US IN NOVEMBER 1975 IN CONNECTION WITH EXIM BANK MEETING ON NUCLEAR PROGRAM FINANCING. HE DOES NOT SPEAK ENGLISH.

4. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO SEE BROAD HIGH-LEVEL PROGRAM FOR AMMASSARI, CONCENTRATING PARTICULARLY ON THEMES RELATED TO ONGOING DISCUSSIONS IN EWG BUT REFLECTING AMMASSARI'S BROADER INTERESTS AS WELL. SINCE MAJOR EWG THEMES ARE FUEL-CYCLE LINKED (EXPLORATION, REPROCESSING AND ENRICHMENT) AND FINANCING, INTERVIEWS WITH SENIOR USG OFFICIALS IN THIS AREA WOULD BE APPROPRIATE. PARTICULARLY USEFUL WOULD BE INTERVIEWS DESIGNED TO ACQUAINT AMMASSARI WITH US POLICY PROBLEMS IN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER IN ENRICHMENT AND REPROCESSING, INCLUDING ACQUAINTANCE WITH CONGRESSIONAL CONCERNS IF POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE. VISIT WITH PRIVATE-SECTOR OFFICIALS IN ENRICHMENT AREA -- I.E., URANIUM ENRICHMENT ASSOCIATES -- MIGHT BE USEFUL IN VIEW OF ENHANCED POSSIBILITIES ARISING FROM RECENT

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CONGRESSIONAL ACTION IN THIS AREA. WE WOULD ENCOURAGE MEETING WITH EXIM BANK OFFICIALS FOR REVIEW OF US OFFER TO HELP WITH ITALIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM AND FIRST-HAND BRIEFING ON PROBLEMS IN EVALUATING ITALIAN REQUEST. ON BROADER CONCERNS, SINCE AMMASSARI IS SENIOR OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSERVATION EFFORTS, BRIEFING OR DISCUSSIONS IN THIS AREA MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE. A REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL OIL PICTURE WOULD FIT AS WELL. IF TIME PERMITS, UTILITIES MANAGEMENT AND

REGULATION MIGHT BE OF INTEREST.

5. OBJECTIVE OF THIS EXERCISE, IN OUR OPINION, IS TO INCREASE AMMASSARI'S COMPREHENSION AND UNDERSTANDING US ENERGY SITUATION, POLICY CONCERNS AND LIMITATIONS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE AMMASSARI'S VISIT SHOULD BE USED AS OPPORTUNITY TO NEGOTIATE. ALTHOUGH AMMASSARI WOULD HAVE VALUABLE INSIGHTS ON ITALIAN ENERGY SCENE, WE BELIEVE IT BETTER TO BRIEF THAN DEBRIEF. AMMASSARI, WHO WILL BE ON VACATION UNTIL EARLY SEPTEMBER, HAS NOT EXPRESSED ANY PARTICULAR PREFERENCES.

6. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE BEING ADVISED OF PLANNING ON AMMASSARI VISIT. VOLPE

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